GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEFENCE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5905
ANSWERED ON:04.05.2000
STRENGTH OF ARMED FORCES
RASA SINGH RAWAT

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to increase the strength of Armed forces in view of increased incidents of terrorism and also the strategic needs of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government are considering to bring about some vital changes in the traditional method of training of armed forces keeping in view the present circumstances of Guerrilla warfare and `shoot and scoot`;

(d) if so, the details of the action plan chalked out therefor;

(e) whether during his visit to Vietnam he had made a statement to get the services of experts for providing this type of training to armed forces;

(f) if so, the details thereof; (g) whether the Government are aware of the tribes living in hilly areas within the country itself, who are traditionally well-versed in the art of guerrilla warfare; and (h) if so, the special steps being taken or proposed to be taken to recruit people of these areas in Armed forces?

Answer

MINISTER OF DEFENCE

(SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES)

(a) & (b): The process of review of the strength of Armed Forces is a continuous one. There is no proposal to increase the strength of regular Army. However, this Ministry has recommended to the Ministry of Home Affairs an increase in the strength of Rashtriya Rifles, which is a para military force under the administrative control of the Ministry of Defence. Further details of the proposal cannot be divulged for reasons of national security.

(c) & (d): The training requirements of the Armed Forces are properly matched to the needs of freshly recruited officers, Other Ranks (ORs), officers requiring advanced and specialised training. The Counter Insurgency & Jungle Warfare School (CIJW) is presently training officers and men in fighting Low Intensity Conflict Operations (LICO).The School motto `Fight the Guerrilla like a Guerrilla` is unique and is symbolic of the CIJW techniques imparted at the School.

(e) & (f): During the recent visit of Raksha Mantri to Vietnam in March 2000 the two sides agreed to a number of measures to enhance defence cooperation between the two countries. These measures include cooperation in the areas of training, Coast Guard activities, naval activities, and the establishment of a periodical dialogue between the Ministries of Defence of the two countries. Vietnamese side has agreed to consider the possibility of training Indian Armed Forces personnel in the field of Jungle Warfare.

(g) Yes, Sir.

(h) In order to improve the representation in the Army of people from remote, border, hilly and backward areas, a dispensation in educational qualifications from class-X to class-V has been given to all persons from Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Lahaul, Spiti and Kinnaur districts of Himachal Pradesh and tribals from all the States to join Army as General Duty (GD) soldiers.